

THE WEEKLY PORTAGE SENTINEL.

JAMES W. SOMERVILLE, PROPRIETOR.

THE UNION—IT MUST BE PRESERVED.

OFFICE IN PHOENIX BLOCK THIRD STORY.

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Poetical.

We copy below, from the *Frederickian*, a most beautiful poem, which, we are sure, will stir every patriotic heart in the land:

The Question of the Day.

BY RALPH BENDIS.

Dissever the Union! that the worn-out throne
Across the sea may mock us as we fall!
And every patriot's heart be torn in twain,
And every patriot's heart be torn in twain,
And every patriot's heart be torn in twain,
And every patriot's heart be torn in twain,<

Dissever the Union, and watch the stars
Like scattered seeds on the earth with growing light!
Pray that they prove not nations that fade,
But that they prove not nations that fade,

To see great hives of unexampled bees,
From every clime, and every clime,
From every clime, and every clime,
From every clime, and every clime,

See how the stars, our young and lovely land,
Thence on two vast and crumbly stars
Thence on two vast and crumbly stars
Thence on two vast and crumbly stars,

In her deep heart she holds some mighty deed,
That stirred the nations with their words, and bore
With all the strength of a world of words and thought,
With all the strength of a world of words and thought,

Up, people of the States that love your home!
Up, gallant hearts that throbb'd with patriot's flame!
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The Japanese.

[The extracts below are from a volume entitled, "Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan, in the years 1857, 58, 59." The work is from the able pen of Laurence Oliphant, Esq., private Secretary of Lord Elgin. The commercial treaties recently entered into between these nations and our country are opening new worlds to the investigation of the traveler.]

THE COUNCIL OF STATE.

There is a body of men who possess great influence in the State; these are the princes of the blood. Should the Tycoon and his council differ upon any weighty matter of state government, the question is referred for arbitration to a tribunal composed of three of these royal princes. Should they confirm the opinion of the council, the Tycoon, to whom is denied the privilege of his

re-lives, or the "happy dispatch," has no alternative but to abdicate incontinently in favor of his nearest heir. Should, on the other hand, the emperors agree with their royal relatives, which in all probability they do, unless public opinion is too strongly against them, then the whole of the council are bound, without further ceremony, at once to dispatch themselves, in the happy manner peculiar to Japan, to those Elysian fields, where they will probably become distinguished as canonized kamis, and the patron saints of many a Japanese household. This notorious method of suicide, the only Japanese custom which the westerner who has long been familiar, has of late years assumed a somewhat modified form, and no longer consists in that unpleasant process of abdomen ripping, which must have been almost as disagreeable an operation to witness as to perform. My friend Higo-no-kami presented me with a knife proper to be used under the old system—an exceedingly business-like weapon, about ten inches long, sharp as a razor, and made of steel of the highest temper. Now this knife is only used to make a slight incision, significant of the intention of the victim to put an end to himself. He has collected his wife and family to see how a hero can die his dearest friend, he who in our country would have been his best man at his wedding, stands over him with a drawn sword, and when he commences to make the fateful incision, the sword descends, and the head rolls at the feet of his disconsolate family.

JAPANESE PLUNKIES.

A train of youths entered, bearing pipes and tea. They were all dressed simply and uniformly; indeed, so exactly did they resemble one another, that they must have been selected as good matches. They entered with an air of profound respect, the head slightly bent, the eyes fixed on the ground, and moved with a shuffling gait, as though afraid to lift their feet from the floor. During the period of our visit, these young men were constantly coming in with refreshments; as they never looked up, it was always a matter of wonder to me how they found their way, while the monotonous regularity of their movements was quite painful. Notwithstanding which it must be admitted that the manners of the Japanese are infinitely more agreeable than those of the same race in our own country.

SHORTING.

The representations which we had frequently made to our friend and guardian, Tainoske, and the avidity which we manifested in the purchase of all Japanese articles of manufacture, induced that worthy to collect for our benefit, every morning, a number of vendors of larder, china, and embroidery, who used to spread their wares in our veranda; so that during the earlier part of the day, they assumed somewhat the appearance of a bazaar. In the enjoyment of this extravagant amusement, our mornings used to fly rapidly. Each box contained some specimens we had not yet seen.

THE CHINESE.

The Chinese, in particular, was an endless source of interest, from the variety of patterns and devices which it presented. On some of the cups were raised lakre representations of pleasure boats, with tiny windows, on opening which a party of ladies and gentlemen drinking tea were discovered within, all on the minutest possible scale. At the bottom of other cups, a tortoise, beautifully executed in china, might be observed, placidly reposing, until the tea was poured in, when he rose to the surface a most animated reptile.

D-GS IN JAPAN.

The dogs peculiar to Japan, and which is supposed to have been the origin of the King Charles Spaniel, does indeed bear a considerable resemblance to that breed; the ears are not so long and silky, and the nose is more of a pug; but the size, shape and color of the body are almost identical. The face is by no means attractive; as though staring from the head; the forehead is overhanging, and the nose so minute that it forms rather a depression than a projection on the face; the jaw is somewhat prominent, and is frequently so much underhung that the mouth cannot be shut, in consequence of which the tongue protrudes in a waggish manner, at variance with the stately dignity which should be the mark of canines, which should be closed, with a tendency to wink. When the great majority of our party had furnished themselves with three or four of these prepossessing animals each, which were confined in kennels formed of paper screens up in our loft, the consequences to an unhappy victim like myself, who had resisted their charms, were most trying. They used to demolish their paper kennels with their teeth, quarrel with each other, howl diabolically during the still hours of the night, or have spasms. They are subject to weakness, and violent cramp in the loins and hind legs, and then their owners used to devote the small hours of the morning to fomenting them with hot water, and wrapping them in warm flannels. In spite of all their efforts some of these delicate little creatures died, to the inexpressible grief of those who had listened so often to their nocturnal whines. Even in Yedo, the price of a handsome pair of dogs is as much as fifty or sixty dollars, so that it is worth while to sit up night to alleviate their sufferings.

THE VISIT.

A broad street, similar to those in the principal quarter, led us to a handsome gateway, this, on one account, at all events, we were not a little relieved to find, was our journey's end, as the posture, during an hour and a half, had been a trying one for British legs. Emerging from our box-like conveyance, we shuffled after Moriyama, who was always at his post. Ascending some steps, at the top of which were relinquished our slippers, we passed through a series of ante-chambers, with walls of paper screens, until we were ushered finally into an oblong apartment, at the farther end of which, on the left-hand side, stood the two ministers, behind two long square tables, and six wax candles on single stands, for it was by this time seven P. M. Exactly facing by the way were tables and six more candles, behind which we took up our position. For some time we all remained standing, and the usual complimentary expressions were interchanged. Then, all having left the room except Lord Elgin, Mr. Hokenen, and myself, we sat down on chairs, (an unexpected luxury, and preceded by business. Moriyama, during all this time, was in a prostrate attitude on the floor between Lord Elgin and the ministers, touching the ground reverentially with his forehead whenever he was called upon to interpret. Lower down, and remaining standing, were our friends, the commissioners, while in a sort of passage formed by a hanging screen behind the ministers, were a row of people, who ostensibly took no part in the ceremony, but some of whom were no doubt spies, while others observed occasionally prompting the ministers. These proceedings seemed somewhat embarrassed by the novelty of the situation, and gave one the impression of being very new to office.

After the ordinary tea we were supplied with a beverage peculiar to the upper classes of Japan; this consists of a sort of green made of tea leaves themselves. They are first stored, then dried and ground in a hand mill into powder; this is mixed with hot water and whisked with a split bamboo until it creams. It is served up hot, and looks

like physics. Altogether, I thought it more palatable than some. This delicacy is called kofuchin, or thick tea; it was succeeded by a number of small square wooden boxes on little stands; they were rather like toy-boxes, and might be supposed to contain some description of game. We each had one of these to ourselves. When the lids were removed, we discovered a very tempting assortment of barley-sugar, sponge cakes, Gibraltar rock, and other confectionery, not to be distinguished in taste from the manufactures of our own country, except by school boys, or those really versed in the subject. We were not only supposed to nibble at these sweetmeats during the visit but, the boxes, with all that remained in them, were sent after us to our abode, so that we were enabled, for some days afterwards, to retire to the privacy of our chambers whenever we felt moved, and feast in seclusion upon these delicious contents. Our audience having at last come to an end, we took leave with many profound and polite speeches, and returned to our rooms, our companions having in the meantime, been feasted with tea and sweetmeats in an adjoining room.

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THE CHINESE.

The Japanese write, like the Chinese, in columns, from the top to the bottom of the paper, beginning at the right-hand side. The character is less fantastic and far more running than the Chinese. There is, indeed, not the slightest similarity between the languages, the tone being monosyllabic and the other polysyllabic. The Japanese words are often of unconscionable length, but the sounds are musical, and not difficult to imitate; whereas the Chinese words, though of one syllable, consist generally of a gulp or a grunt, not attainable by those whose ears have not become thoroughly demoralized by a long residence in the country. We learned more Japanese words in a week than we had of Chinese in a year; and in making a small, rough vocabulary, I found no difficulty in so locating the letters of the English alphabet as to convey to my memory a fair representation of the sound I wished to recollect. In Chinese this is quite impossible.

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A Little Hero.

Grace Greenwood wrote the following little story—and a true one it is—for the *Little Pilgrim*. She gets the facts from an incident described by the *Hartford Daily Times*, some years ago, as having happened in Cok's Meadows:

In the city of Hartford, Connecticut, lives the hero of true history I am about to relate, but no longer "little," as the perilous adventure which made him for a time famous in his native town, happened several years ago.

Our hero was then a bright, active boy of fourteen, the son of a mechanic. In the severe winter of 18—, the father worked in a factory, about a mile and a half from his home, and every day the boy carried his dinner across a wide piece of meadow.

One keen frosty day he found the snow on this meadow nearly two feet deep, and no traces of the little foot-path remaining. Yet he ran on as fast as possible, plunging through drifts—keeping himself warm by vigorous exercises, and cheerful thoughts.

When in the midst of the meadow, fully half a mile from any house, he suddenly felt himself going down, down, down—he had fallen into a well!

He sunk down into the dark, icy water, but rose immediately to the surface. There he grasped hold of a plank, which had fallen into the well as he went down. One end of this rested on the bottom, the other rose about four feet above the surface of the water.

The poor lad shouted for help till he was hoarse and almost speechless; but all in vain, as it was impossible for him to make himself heard from such a depth, and at such a distance from any house. So at last he concluded that if he was to be saved at all, he must save himself, and begin at once, as he was getting extremely cold in the water.

First he drew himself up on the plank, and braced himself against the top of it and the wall of the well, which was of brick and quite smooth. Then he pulled off his coat, and, taking out his pocket-knife, cut off his boots, that he might work to greater advantage. Then, with his feet against one side of the well, and his shoulder against the top, here he was obliged to pause, take breath, and gather up his energies for the work yet before him. Far harder was it than he had yet gone through; for the side of the well being from that point completely covered with ice, he must cut with his knife grasping-places for his fingers, slowly and carefully all the way up.

It was almost a hopeless attempt, but it was all that he could do. And here the little hero lifted up his heart to God, and prayed fervently for help, fearing he could never get out alone.

Doubtless the Lord heard his voice calling from the depths, and piled him. He wrought no miracle to save him, but braved into his heart a yet larger measure of calmness and courage, strengthening him to work out his own deliverance. It is in this way that God answers our prayers, when we call upon him in time of trouble.

After this the little hero cut his way upward, inch and inch. His wet stockings froze to the ice and kept his feet from slipping, but his shirt was quite torn from his shoulders as he had reached the top.

He did reach it at last—climbed out into the snow, and lay down for a moment to rest, panting out his breath in little white clouds on the clear frosty air.

He was properly known as "The Scoundrel," but his real name was Tanjeram. This man appeared in our garden one evening, and astonished us all by speaking English without any perceptible accent, using very long words, and informed us that he was in the habit of taking lunar observations. He further asserted that he had never been out of Japan in his life, and that he required his knowledge of the English language at a school at Yedo. This school he described as being attended by Japanese

scholars of learning foreign languages which they were taught by professors who had qualified themselves by study, for this purpose. With all our respect for the intelligence and advancement of the Japanese, this was rather more than we could accept, and we could gain no corroborative testimony on the subject, so that I have no doubt it was a pure piece of invention, on the part of Tanjeram, who had evidently, by some accident or other, passed some years of his life in the United States. He stoutly denied that such was the case, and he spoke with a slight nasal twang, making use of expressions which he certainly must have acquired from a professor who had studied the "American" and not the English language. The expression of his face was totally different from that of any other Japanese I ever saw. There was a mixture of cunning and insolence in his manner foreign to the nature of countrymen, and which indisputably proved that he had lived long enough abroad to substitute the manners of western civilization for those of Japanese barbarism.

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Grace Greenwood wrote the following little story—and a true one it is—for the *Little Pilgrim*. She gets the facts from an incident described by the *Hartford Daily Times*, some years ago, as having happened in Cok's Meadows:

In the city of Hartford, Connecticut, lives the hero of true history I am about to relate, but no longer "little," as the perilous adventure which made him for a time famous in his native town, happened several years ago.

Our hero was then a bright, active boy of fourteen, the son of a mechanic. In the severe winter of 18—, the father worked in a factory, about a mile and a half from his home, and every day the boy carried his dinner across a wide piece of meadow.

One keen frosty day he found the snow on this meadow nearly two feet deep, and no traces of the little foot-path remaining. Yet he ran on as fast as possible, plunging through drifts—keeping himself warm by vigorous exercises, and cheerful thoughts.

When in the midst of the meadow, fully half a mile from any house, he suddenly felt himself going down, down, down—he had fallen into a well!

He sunk down into the dark, icy water, but rose immediately to the surface. There he grasped hold of a plank, which had fallen into the well as he went down. One end of this rested on the bottom, the other rose about four feet above the surface of the water.

The poor lad shouted for help till he was hoarse and almost speechless; but all in vain, as it was impossible for him to make himself heard from such a depth, and at such a distance from any house. So at last he concluded that if he was to be saved at all, he must save himself, and begin at once, as he was getting extremely cold in the water.

First he drew himself up on the plank, and braced himself against the top of it and the wall of the well, which was of brick and quite smooth. Then he pulled off his coat, and, taking out his pocket-knife, cut off his boots, that he might work to greater advantage. Then, with his feet against one side of the well, and his shoulder against the top, here he was obliged to pause, take breath, and gather up his energies for the work yet before him. Far harder was it than he had yet gone through; for the side of the well being from that point completely covered with ice, he must cut with his knife grasping-places for his fingers, slowly and carefully all the way up.

It was almost a hopeless attempt, but it was all that he could do. And here the little hero lifted up his heart to God, and prayed fervently for help, fearing he could never get out alone.

Doubtless the Lord heard his voice calling from the depths, and piled him. He wrought no miracle to save him, but braved into his heart a yet larger measure of calmness and courage, strengthening him to work out his own deliverance. It is in this way that God answers our prayers, when we call upon him in time of trouble.

After this the little hero cut his way upward, inch and inch. His wet stockings froze to the ice and kept his feet from slipping, but his shirt was quite torn from his shoulders as he had reached the top.

He did reach it at last—climbed out into the snow, and lay down for a moment to rest, panting out his breath in little white clouds on the clear frosty air.

He was properly known as "The Scoundrel," but his real name was Tanjeram. This man appeared in our garden one evening, and astonished us all by